



# Naturally Occurring Asbestos

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY • REGION 9 • SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA • AUGUST 2004

## Update on U.S. EPA activities to address NOA in El Dorado Hills

Asbestos occurs in rock and soil as the result of natural geologic processes, often near earthquake faults as in El Dorado Hills and other areas of California. Disturbance of naturally occurring asbestos (NOA), through construction or recreation activities, for example, can raise dust and release asbestos fibers into the air. Asbestos is a known human carcinogen. When people inhale asbestos fibers, whether from industrial or natural sources, their health may be at risk. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) is working to address concerns about potential exposure to fibers of disturbed naturally occurring asbestos in El Dorado Hills.

### Community meetings in August

U.S. EPA plans to hold community meetings on August 18 and 19 to share information on the scientific basis for our work. Then, on August 24, we'll hold a meeting to discuss our draft strategy for assessing the potential for exposure to naturally occurring asbestos in El Dorado Hills. All meetings will be in the **Folsom Community Center, 52 Natoma Street in Folsom.**

**Asbestos science seminar:** U.S. EPA has invited experts from State and federal agencies to provide information on the current state of the science of asbestos, including sampling and analysis methods, health effects and epidemiological data, and risk assessment. Local government and stakeholder representatives are also invited to speak. The science seminar will consist of a series of short presentations with discussion periods following each presentation

and will last for approximately four hours. To accommodate everyone who is interested, U.S. EPA will hold meetings with identical agendas on both Wednesday, August 18, and Thursday, August 19, 2004, beginning at 5:30 pm on both days.

**NOA assessment strategy:** On Tuesday, August 24 at 6:30 pm, U.S. EPA will review the scientific basis for the planned assessment, describe the draft sampling plan and exposure assessment strategy, and then open the floor to discussion.

### Oak Ridge High School response

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has covered all areas of bare soil on the Oak Ridge High School campus to address naturally occurring asbestos in the soil. U.S. EPA began this project during the school's spring break and, after pausing while school was in session,



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completed the work during the summer vacation period. This work will minimize the chances of naturally occurring asbestos in the soil becoming airborne and posing a risk to students and staff through inhalation. U.S. EPA is using various methods and materials to cover the soil, as best fits the use of the specific areas of the campus. Combined with the school district's mitigation of the sports fields, track, and courts, USEPA's action comprises a comprehensive treatment of possible sources of airborne asbestos on campus.

### Assessment of NOA exposure

Recent testing at Oak Ridge High School revealed the potential for exposure to amphibole asbestos at levels of concern during dust-generating activities. While the high school has been remediated, U.S. EPA is planning to conduct an assessment to determine if the potential for exposure was confined to Oak Ridge High School or if it is a community-wide issue. Some asbestos-related diseases may take decades after exposure to appear, so U.S. EPA is especially concerned about future health effects among children. As a

result, U.S. EPA plans to assess schools and parks where children and adolescents engage in dust-generating activities that could expose them to airborne asbestos concentrations which could be of concern from a public health perspective. Tentatively, U.S. EPA plans to take samples from Rolling Hills Middle School, Silva Valley Elementary School and Jackson Elementary School, and from the Community Park, although plans may change due to public comment. To test for asbestos exposure, technicians in protective clothing will simulate typical outdoor recreation activities while wearing instruments that collect samples of airborne dust. U.S. EPA will then have the samples analyzed and report the results to the public.

### Mailing list update

If you did not receive this in the mail and would like to be on the U.S. EPA mailing list or if you want to correct the information in our mailing database, please fill out the form below, cut it out, stamp it, and mail it. If you want us to provide your contact information to a local community organization on asbestos issues,

please check the corresponding box. U.S. EPA will keep your contact information confidential, as required by the federal Privacy Act, unless you specify on the form that you want us to provide your information to the community group.



Figure 1: Oak Ridge High School before and after landscaping



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## MAILING LIST COUPON

### Naturally Occurring Asbestos in California — El Dorado Hills mailing list

Release my information for a local community group contact list: ☐

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_



*Figure 2: Oak Ridge High School before and after paving*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### U.S. EPA documents are available at El Dorado County libraries

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has completed written responses to questions submitted by the public at the community meeting in the Oak Ridge High School auditorium on February 25, 2004. "Naturally Occurring Asbestos in El Dorado Hills: Questions and Answers" as well as the approved Action Memorandum authorizing U.S. EPA's cleanup project at Oak Ridge High School and supporting documents are now available at:

**El Dorado County Library  
Oak Ridge High School branch**  
1120 Harvard Way, El Dorado Hills

**El Dorado County Library  
Main branch**  
345 Fair Lane, Placerville

Selected documents are available from the U.S. EPA's web site at <http://www.epa.gov/region09/toxic/noa>. Please contact the Superfund Records Center at 415-536-2000 to request copies.

### Please contact the people below if you have any questions or concerns

#### Oak Ridge Response

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#### NOA Assessment

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#### Health Effects Consultation

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#### Public Participation

Don Hodge, Community Involvement Coordinator  
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Office: (415) 972-3240

U.S. EPA toll-free Community Involvement message line: (800) 231-3075

# August Community Meetings on NOA

All meetings will be held at:

Folsom Community Center, 52 Natoma Street in Folsom

## Asbestos Science Seminar

Wednesday, August 18, 2004, 5:30 pm

Thursday, August 19, 2004, 5:30 pm

Welcome: Dan Meer, Emergency Response, Planning and Assessment Branch, U.S. EPA, Region 9

California geology and asbestos: John Clindenbeard, CGS

Aerial remote sensing for asbestos: Gregg Swayze, Ph.D., USGS

Monitoring of asbestos exposure: Chris Weis, Ph.D., U.S. EPA/NEIC

Health effects of asbestos exposure: Jill Dyken, Ph.D., ATSDR

Current and future EPA activities: Richard Troast, U.S. EPA HQ

Additional presentations from representatives of state and local government and local stakeholder groups

**Discussion following each presentation**

## NOA Assessment Strategy

Tuesday, August 24 at 6:30 pm

Review of science of asbestos assessment: Gerry Hiatt, Ph.D., U.S. EPA

Strategy for assessing NOA in El Dorado Hills: Jere Johnson, U.S. EPA

**Discussion following presentations**

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